

Isaac P. Smith House
513 East Main Street
New Albany
Floyd County
Indiana

HABS No. IN-151

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ISAAC P. SMITH HOUSE

HABS No. IN-151

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Location:

513 E. MAIN STREET
NEW ALBANY, FLOYD COUNTY, INDIANA

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Isaac P. Smith House was owned and built by architect and master builder Isaac P. Smith, who designed and built many buildings in the New Albany area during the mid-1800's.

B. LATITUDE: 38° 15' N.

LONGITUDE: 85° 50' W.

C. PRESENT OWNER: The H.K. Williams Company, Louisville, Kentucky.

D. PRESENT OCCUPANT: None.

E. PRESENT USE: None.

F. PHYSICAL HISTORY:

The historical signpost in the front yard states that the house was built between 1839 and 1841. However, since Isaac Smith didn't purchase the property from the New Albany Theological Seminary until 1847, this date is incorrect for a number of reasons: family history, the fact that Smith was known to be a master builder and architect, and the sharp rise in the property value from 1847 to 1853. Also, the fireplaces are definitely circa 1850. Even though they could have been updated or replaced, they appear to be the originals. The deed record only dates back from the New Albany Theological Seminary - Isaac Smith transaction of 1847, which suggests that the land had originally been given to the Seminary.

It is interesting to note that the New Albany Theological Seminary, also known as Ayres University, was the first Presbyterian Seminary of the northwest and was first established in a log cabin loomhouse in Hanover, Indiana, in 1829 (an offshoot is now Hanover College). The second home of the Seminary was established in New Albany in 1840. The move from Hanover was due to a \$150,000 gift from Elias Ayres if they would move to New Albany. The 1850's brought a split over the question of slavery, and in 1859 the Seminary was moved to Chicago by Cyrus McCormick and reorganized as the McCormick Theological Seminary.

G. ARCHITECT-BUILDER: Isaac P. Smith.

H.LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:

All of that part of out-lot letter 'B' north of Upper High Street (now East Main Street) in Plat No. 93 in the city of New Albany in Floyd County, Indiana, which beginning on Upper High Street 10 feet east from the southwest corner of said out-lot, at the corner of the alley now in use; running thence eastward along said Upper High Street 40 feet and extends back from said street the same width 200 feet deep.

I.CHAIN OF TITLE:

- 1.1847 Deed August 12, 1847 Recorded August 17, 1847
in Volume 'S' Deed Records pp. 611-612
New Albany Theological Seminary
to Isaac P. Smith
- 2.1864 Deed August 16, 1864 Recorded August 20, 1864
Deed Record 11 p.258
Isaac P. Smith
to James R.W. Smith
- 3.1864 Deed August 20, 1864 Recorded September 10, 1864
Deed Record 11 p.313
James R.W. Smith
to Abby H. Smith
- Note: No conveyance out of Abby H. Smith or will or administration of record on her estate in Floyd County, Indiana.
- 4.1913 Will Probated June 9, 1913
Will Record 32, Jefferson County Court Records, p.580
James R.W. Smith
to Anna E. Smith
- 5.1925 Will Probated February 16, 1925
Will Record 'G', Floyd County Court Records, pp.473-475
Anna E. Smith
undivided 2/3 interest to Kathryn S. Wade
undivided 1/3 interest to Emily M. Johnson
and Anna B. Mills
- 6.1937 Deed November 27, 1937 Recorded December 1, 1937
Deed Record 100 p.248
Mutual Trust and Deposit Co.,
Administor of the Estate of Kathryn S. Wade
undivided 2/3 interest to Elizabeth S. Williams
- 7.1938 Deed February 8, 1938 Recorded May 7, 1938
Deed Record 101 p.17
Emily M. Johnson and
Anna B. Mills
undivided 1/3 interest to Elizabeth . Williams

8. 1950 Deed October 27, 1950 Recorded May 9, 1951
Deed Record 132 p. 27
Elizabeth S. Williams
to Katherine Williams Wright
and Allen Burton Wright
9. 1966 Deed October 3, 1966 Recorded October 14, 1966
Deed Record 182 p. 573
Katherine Williams Albertson
(formerly Katherine Williams Wright, widow)
and Vaughn S. Albertson
to H.K. Williams Company

J. NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL PLAN AND CONSTRUCTION:

See Architectural Information.

K. NOTES ON ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS:

It appears that the north side of the house was an addition, but no information could be found to support this. Also, as stated in the architectural information, a front porch along the south is in evidence. No information was available pertaining to the removal of the rear porch.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

1. Deed and title to property.
2. Noble Smith, student, University of Cincinnati.
3. Mrs. H.K. Williams, owner.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. GENERAL STATEMENT

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: The Smith House, located on the south side of New Albany near the Ohio River, was built between 1848 and 1850. The brick and timber residence is modest in scale, and hopefully will be restored by the owner.

2. Condition of Fabric: Good.

B. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXTERIOR

1. Overall Dimensions: 60'-5" x 40'-10".

2. Number of Bays: Three, including hall.

3. Number of Stories: Two, with partial basement and third floor.

4. Layout, Shape: Formal axis with two rooms on each side; L-shaped addition projecting from rear (north elevation).

5. Foundations: Red brick, common bond, with header generally every eighth course. Wall thickness varies from about 8" to 1'-0". Bricks are approximately 2 1/4" x 4" x 8", and walls are generally in good condition.

6. Wall Construction, Finish and Color: Walls are of red brick laid up in common bond. All brick needs cleaning and pointing. The plan suggests that the rear portion was added at a later date, but no vertical lines in the brickwork substantiate this.

7. Structural System, Framing: Brick bearing walls with wooden joists. First floor framed with 2" x 10"s at 16" o.c. Floor thickness at stairwell suggest second floor is framed the same. Attic framing is difficult to analyze since access is possible only through ceiling.

8. Porches, Stoops, and Bulkheads: Front entry on south elevation consists of concrete slab on five-course brick foundation with two concrete steps. Front door is set into a protective alcove entry, defined by a decorative bulkhead spanning between wooden pilasters. Brick discoloration around entry and periodic

wood nailers suggest columns and a porch which covered the entire stoop on the south elevation. All other exterior doors on the west, north, and east elevations show brick discoloration, evidence of stoops at floor level. A two-story porch on the east elevation is evidenced by brick discoloration, nailers, and a small steel beam which spans the gap between the main part of the house and the southern side of the L-shaped portion, at the second floor level. Three doors on the second floor open onto the non-existent porch.

9. Chimneys: Four brick chimneys, two at each end of the main house, are visible only above the roof line, because they are contained within the east and west exterior walls. Two other chimneys in the north wall are also of brick. Prior to the installation of the 20th Century gas furnace, the house was heated by the eight main fireplaces-four on each floor.

10. Openings-Doorways and Doors: The main entrance (south elevation) is symmetrically located inside the wood-worked alcove. Thin lights up each side border the doorway with a large transom light above. Jamb and head consist of wide, decorative wooden construction matching bulkheads and pilasters. All other exterior doorways consist of timber thresholds and soldier course brick lintels. All doors are solid core wood with molded panels, nine panels, and three tiers.

Openings-Windows: All windows have timber sills and soldier course lintels except all of the windows on the south facade which have thick limestone lintels. All windows (except south facade) are simple double-hung wooden windows with twelve lights set in thin wood muntins and mullions. First floor south facade windows have a set of two double-hung sashes separated by a thick wood-frame mullion in the center of the window opening.

11. Roof-Shape and Covering: Main gable, covered with black asphalt shingles, with ridge running east and west, covers major portion of house. A smaller, lower gable of like covering, covers the rear portion of the house. its ridge runs north and south.

Roof-Cornice: A boxed wood cornice at the front section of the house is located on the east and west elevations. The eaves at the rear of the house are defined by a simple fascia board of wood.

Roof-Dormers: None.

C. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INTERIOR

1. Floor Plans, by Floor-Basement: Rectangular-shaped layout with furnace room and coal bin. Crawl space under L-shaped rear section of house.

First Floor: Formal entry hall runs south to north and has a stairway to the second floor located to the northwest of the front door. Two large rooms open to the east off of the corridor and are connected by two large double doors. This

probably was used as a living area. To the west, two more large rooms open off of the hall, and are connected by a single door. The front room was probably used as a sitting room, and the larger, rear room as a dining room. The dining room is connected to a rear section containing kitchen, pantry, and bath, which opens onto a porch.

Second Floor: Similar to the first floor, with four large bedrooms off of the main hall. The L-shaped rear portion steps down from the second floor level, again suggesting a later addition. Three doors open onto an non-existent porch.

Third Floor: The third floor is only above the main part of the house, and has a lowered ceiling and covered rafters suggesting use as an alternative bedroom or study.

2. Stairways-Basement: Open single run stairway on the west wall to the rear of the house (main part). Access is provided under the first floor stairway.

First Floor: Located in the main hall on the west wall, the stairway is wooden open well. It provides the only access to the upper two floors. The treads curve out at the bottom slightly, and turn 90° at the top. It has turned balusters and newel post, and a continuous handrail from the balcony at the second floor.

Second Floor: Located between two bedrooms east of the corridor, the wooden stair gives access to a partial third floor. A closed storage space is located underneath the stair.

3. Flooring-Basement: Concrete.

Flooring-All Other Floors: Wooden planking, exposed.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finish-Basement: Brick walls with exposed joist ceiling.

Wall and Ceiling Finish-All Other Floors: Painted and plastered over wooden lath.

5. Doorways and Doors: All doors are solid with molded panels similar to exterior doors. The number of panels varies from four to nine; the number of ties varies from two to three. Door and window trim is wide and ornate, some with pitched pediment and high profile. All trim is painted.

6. Notable Hardware: None.

7. Mechanical Equipment-Heating: The original heating was supplied by the eight fireplaces, but that was replaced by a 20th Century gas-fired furnace and galvanized ducts.

Lighting: Electric, with no fixtures of significance.

Plumbing: 20th Century, with no fixtures of significance.

D. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. General Setting: The house is located on the north side of East Main Street (formerly Upper High Street). A paved alley

defines the lot line of the west, and the east side is bounded by a fence. The sidewalk on the front (south) is concrete. The original iron fence in front was donated to the scrap drive during World War I, but the gate posts remain. A series of steps and a concrete sidewalk provide walkway from the sidewalk to the front porch.

2. Historic Landscape Design: None.

3. Outbuildings: None.

PREPARED BY

WAYNE NORLIN
DON ROTHENBERGER
MAY 16, 1975

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
MUNCIE, INDIANA

Edited for HABS by:

Druscilla J. Null
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